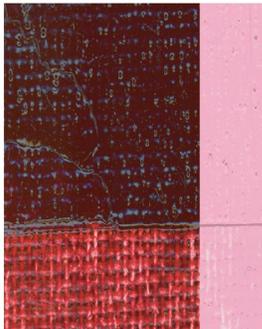




Utrecht Art Supplies

Product Profile: Alizarin Crimson Original vs. Permanent

"Why do you offer Alizarin Crimson and "Permanent Alizarin Crimson"? Is there a big difference?"



A: Alizarin Crimson is the synthetic version of one component of the traditional vegetable-derived color Madder. (The other, more fugitive component, Purpurin, gives madder a unique hue that is distinctly different from Alizarin.) While Alizarin is still considered by our industry permanent to the standards of durable, professional painting, it is the least lightfast color still in the modern palette. How quickly it may fade would depend on how it is used on the palette and how the resulting artwork is displayed and cared for.

Mixing fugitive colors directly with white to produce tints will speed up fading compared to using it full strength or in glazing over mid-tones and darks. Paintings displayed in full sun or under unshielded halogen lamps can fade more quickly than if they are protected from harsh UV light.



1824 portrait by Eduard Friedrich Leybold

Permanent Alizarin Crimson is not directly related to Madder. It's a different proprietary formula depending on the manufacturer, but most use a quinacridone or other synthetic organic pigment to simulate the appearance of the traditional color. With some adjustment it's an excellent replacement for artists who are most concerned with permanence.

The art materials industry has gone to a lot of effort to make consumers aware of issues of permanence so today it's possible for artists to decide for themselves which option to select, based on individual skill, pictorial objectives and aversion to risk of fading.



Paint manufacturers still offer genuine Alizarin Crimson because there is great demand among artists for this unique color that's present on so many historical works of art. Despite being relatively less permanent than other colors, we feel with good craftsmanship on the part of the artist and proper care on the part of collectors, Alizarin Crimson still deserves its place in the modern painter's kit.

Questions? [Ask the Expert](#)

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